

LIGHT AS A LOCOMOTIVE POWER.—The Academy of Sciences have been assured by M. Becamier that, in consequence of certain experiments detailed to the Academy, he has been led to conclude that light is capable of being employed as a locomotive power. This would beat steam and electricity hollow, as a contemporary remarks. Only think of "riding on a sunbeam,"—the "fine phrensy" of the rolling-eyed poet a sober matter of fact! Why M. Becamier should also conclude, as he does, that light is "a physical substance," no less than a physical force, we cannot see. That it is something more than a mere vibration or oscillation—that it is, at all events, a radiative force—operative in "physical substance," may be admitted; but it is too late now, we fear, to retrograde to the idea of material particles. It does not appear very clearly whether M. Becamier means the true ray of light, however, or light proper apart from its adjuncts.

EXHIBITION OF GAS APPARATUS.—In consequence of the determination "that no gas apparatus in practical operation can be shown at the great Exhibition, arrangements have been made by the Gas Fitters Association that an important portion of the Polytechnic Institution of London shall be set apart (for six months at least) for the exposition in full operation of any apparatus embracing a novel application of gas, either for culinary, heating, chemical, or manufacturing purposes, and for the illustration of improvements in burners, lighting, ventilation, &c. They have invited manufacturers from all parts to send apparatus consistent with this object. To induce a proper response from inventors, the association must show their determination to prevent this contemplated exhibition from being made the means of puffing one man's inventions and abusing another's.

SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The third session of the Somersetshire Archaeological Society was held at Taunton on Feb. 17. The Rev. F. Watts commenced by giving a description of female costume—as regards head-dress—from the early ages down to the present period. The Rev. F. B. Portman read some communications, which had been received by the society from Mr. Albert Way, relating to the discovery of some gold ring ornaments found in Dorsetshire, of great antiquity. There were many interesting exhibitions. Among them was a remarkable specimen of wood carving, by a labouring man named Halliday, living at Chilton Polden. The subject in "The Canterbury Pilgrims," after Stothard's picture. It is carved out of the solid block—oak. He has been a turnpike man, and has never seen the practice of wood carving.

LIABILITY OF DISTRICT CHURCHWARDENS FOR PAVING-RATES.—On the 18th ult., at Worship-street, Mr. Arnold pronounced judgment in a case of considerable importance to congregations attending the numerous district churches and chapels erected under the provisions of the Church Building Act. The case arose out of a summons by the commissioners of paving for the parish of St. Luke against Messrs. Sowter and Rydon, churchwardens of the district church of St. Matthew, City-road, for the recovery of 164. 17s. 9d., arrears of rates alleged to be due by them in respect of that edifice. The magistrate's decision in the case was to the effect that the liability to pay such rates is clearly cast upon the defendants as the existing churchwardens under the Act 6 & 7 Vict. cap. 37, sec. 17, which empowers them in such capacity to do all things pertaining to that office in relation to ecclesiastical matters.

THE NEW RECORD OFFICE.—Tenders have been received for "the new Record Repository," Rolls Buildings, Chancery Lane; and we understand that the offer by Messrs. Lee and Son was the lowest. The amount is a little under 35,000*l.* Mr. Penhorne is the architect.

THE FIRE NEAR LONDON BRIDGE.—We intended to allude to the circumstances of the destructive fire in Alderman Humphrey's immense warehouse last week; but as there are two or three points requiring more notice than the state of our columns will this week admit of, we must defer mention of it.

ST. GEORGE'S HALL, LIVERPOOL.—It is now said that this noble edifice will in all probability not be opened to the public even in the autumn of the present year. Mr. Holmes, one of the committee, attributes the delay to Dr. Reid's "enormous ventilating and warming arrangements." This, in a letter to the *Liverpool Times*, Dr. Reid explicitly denies.

HALTING PLACES.—A "District Surveyor" points attention to the intolerable evil of a want of conveniences for jurymen at the various courts of law, and, indeed, to the want of them generally attached to public buildings, such as the British Museum, churches, and other places of public meeting, to all of which they might be provided in a way perfectly unobjectionable. Another correspondent, a surgeon, recommends the substitution of glass where slate or stone is now used, the glass not retaining or lodging moisture as even slate does, and being hence more wholesome and cleanly.

THE WINDOW AND HOUSE TAX.—On 19th ult. a very numerous and highly respectable meeting of the inhabitants of Marylebone was held, at which six of the metropolitan members of Parliament attended, when resolutions, condemnatory of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer's project for the nominal abolition of the window-tax, were unanimously passed, amidst the strongest expressions of indignation and dissatisfaction. As the Chancellor has since resigned, along with his colleagues, it may be useless to enter at any length at this moment on the questions at issue; and although other meetings were called before the announcement was made that the Government had resigned, it is probable that the latter circumstance will have checked the wide expression of displeasure that exists and would otherwise have been publicly manifested throughout the country.

CAMBRIDGE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—The second general meeting of the Cambridge Architectural Society for this term was held on 20th ult. the Rev. T. S. Woolleston in the chair. The Hon. R. H. Clive, M.P. was unanimously elected an honorary member, and the Rev. J. T. Beresford, Precentor of Peterborough, Rev. E. Brumell, St. John's, Rev. J. T. Walters, St. John's, and Mr. C. Robinson, Trinity College, as ordinary members. Mr. Denton, of St. John's, curator, called attention to a brass at Wood Ditton Church. A paper on rebuses followed, by Mr. Deck, corresponding secretary of the Oxford Architectural Society.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES.—Mr. Frederick Pollock, a nephew of the Chief Baron, has published a pamphlet, entitled "An Essay and Design for the best and most economical method of building a pair of Labourer's Cottages." Without porches and gutters (the omission would be very undesirable) he makes the cost for the pair 130*l.* Mr. Pollock gives three bed rooms, and considers it a merit that one of them (for the girl) can only be entered through the parents' room. With a possible advantage in special cases, this arrangement, as a general rule, is decidedly objectionable. The writer properly insists on the importance of providing an oven. Thanks are due to Mr. Pollock for his advocacy of a crying want.

A BARN OF GLASS.—We understand that Mr. N. Tuckett intends to cover a large barn, 110 feet long, and 25 feet wide, on his farm at Hevitree, with glass. The corn can be placed in the barn immediately upon being reaped, where it will have the benefit of the sun when it shines, be protected from the showers, and also dried by artificial heat, if required, and then stacked in ricks under a covered stack-yard.

DARLINGTON SURVEY AND LEVELS UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.—A correspondent says, there were nearly fifty tenders sent in for the work, from various parts of the kingdom, varying in amount from 1,270*l.* to 55*l.* The committee decided upon giving it to Messrs. Hebert and Fawcett, civil engineers, of Northallerton and Darlington, for 200*l.*, as they considered the party tendering at 55*l.* could not execute the work for so low a sum. We should think so, too!

* 1861. Wright, Haymarket, London.

INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—On February 11th and 18th the discussion on Mr. A. V. Newton's paper, "An Inquiry into the Nature of Patent Law Protection, with a view to the better appreciation and security of the Rights of Inventors," was renewed, and was continued throughout both evenings.

STATUTES FOR THE ART-UNION OF LONDON.—Thirty-nine statutes have been received by the Art-Union of London in reply to their offered premiums. Two of these arrived after the day fixed for receiving them; and one, a remarkably fine work, is inadmissible, being beyond stipulated size.

SCENERY AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.—We fully agree with two or three correspondents, that Mr. Anderson has redeemed his character by the manner in which the new spectacle of "Azazel" is produced. The scenery of the second act, at Memphis, is extremely good, the procession of the worshippers correct, and the disposition of the characters at their orgies in the temple of Isis (beautifully polychromed) well and gorgeously arranged.

IRON AND GLASS BUILDING IN BELFAST.—It is proposed to erect on Queen's Island a small model of the Hyde-park Building for holding all bazaars, fancy fairs, floral and pictorial exhibitions, &c. Mr. John Boyd is the architect, who, at the request of the gentleman with whom the project originated, has furnished them with a plan of the structure and an estimate of its expense.

SUBSOIL DRAINAGE.—With reference to this subject, our attention has been pointed to a drain and subsoil pipe made some time ago by Mr. Crole, of Ladbroke. A small perforated pipe to take the subsoil drainage is affixed to the top of the drain-pipe.

INTRAMURAL INTERMENT.—In reply to a question asked in the Commons by Sir D. L. Evans, Lord Seymour said that the Board of Health had made every effort to bring the new Act as speedily as possible into effect, and he hoped before long it would be in active operation.

THREATENING EMPLOYERS.—St. Clair, who, with fifty others, struck work at the Exhibition Building, and was alleged to have threatened Mr. Fox, has been committed to prison by the Middlesex Sessions, his appeal against the magistrate's decision having been disallowed. The court was crowded with workpeople.

IRISH IRON FOR ENGLISH MARKETS.—The large castings for the great bridge to be thrown over the Wye at Chepstow, for the South Wales Railway, are being executed in Dublin by the Irish Engineering Company, who have also lately made all the castings required by the Brighton Railway Company for their passenger terminus at London-bridge.

WIDE ESTIMATING.—Do pray insert the following tenders delivered on the 13th ult. for new shop-front and repairs of a house at Brentwood. Mr. T. Bray, architect. "May the difference of opinion never divide friendship."

Curtis	2664	0	0
Winter	500	0	0
Hammond	416	0	0
White	410	0	0
Wilder and Tanner	3e9	10	0

No tender was accepted, as the lowest exceeded the supposed amount.—A S's.

TENDERS.

Tenders for Public Houses for Messrs. Young and Bonbringer, Wandsworth Common. Mr. G. A. Young, architect. Quantities furnished.

Loat	41,000
Meyers	1,197
Brown	1,173
Hayward and Nisim ..	1,125
Loche and Newman ..	1,086
Nicholson and Son ..	1,078

Tenders for Barbary Chapel School. Mr. Turring, architect.

	No. 1.	No. 2.
Brass and Son	£1,614	000
Chamberlain	1,334	000
Nyers	1,300	000
J. Higgs	1,300	000
Haynes	1,300	000
Holland	1,300	000
Locke and Newman ..	1,300	000
W. Higgs	1,100	000
Pipes	1,700	000
Hopkins and Roberts ..	1,100	000